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ACTION: ARA-00

INFO LOG-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
H-01 NSCE-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 HA-09 L-03 PM-10
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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
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AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN
USLO CARIBBEAN
RUEOSBA/24 COMPW/DOI
USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA

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Date 2/27/02 Exemption _____

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E.O. 12356: OADR
TAGS: PREL MARR MEPS, HO NU US
SUBJECT: GON ALLEGES US BOMBED TWO NICARAGUAN TOWNS

1. FOREIGN MINISTER MIGUEL D'ESCOTO GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE AT 1830 (LOCAL) DENOUNCING THE BOMBING OF TWO NICARAGUAN TOWNS, MURA AT 1530 AND WIWILI AT 1600. AN NBC REPORTER WHO ATTENDED THE PRESS CONFERENCE TOLD US D'ESCOTO HAD SAID THE PLANES WERE MOST LIKELY U.S., THAT THE U.S. WAS THE ONLY COUNTRY WAGING WAR AGAINST NICARAGUA, AND THAT THE BOMBINGS CONSTITUTED AN ESCALATION OF U.S. PARTICIPATION IN THE CONFLICT. REPORTERS QUESTIONED D'ESCOTO AS TO THE BASIS OF HIS ALLEGATIONS OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT BUT HE PROVIDED NO EVIDENCE. D'ESCOTO REPORTEDLY SAID "EVERYTHING LEADS US TO BELIEVE IT WAS THE U.S." AND REFERRED TO THE MINING OF CORINTO WHEN THE CIA TOLD THE CONTRAS TO TAKE THE BLAME.
2. IN THE QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD, D'ESCOTO MODIFIED

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HIS ALLEGATIONS SLIGHTLY TO IMPLY THAT THE PLANES MIGHT HAVE BELONGED TO US SPONSORED MERCENARY FORCES. D'ESCOTO ANNOUNCED THAT THE GON WOULD TAKE REPORTERS TO THE TWO TOWNS ON THE MORNING OF DECEMBER 8.

3. D'ESCOTO SAID EIGHT PEOPLE HAD BEEN WOUNDED IN THE ATTACKS.

4. D'ESCOTO ADDED THAT UPON CONCLUSION OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE HE WOULD RETURN TO THE FSLN NATIONAL DIRECTORATE'S EMERGENCY SESSION ALREADY IN PROGRESS.
BERGOLD

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